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the schools of Ireland, and at the same time restore us to the fostering bosom of Christianity.

January 27, 1809. SIMPLEX.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

THE EFFECT OF GENTLE TREATMENT IN TAMING ANIMALS, EXEMPLIFIED.

THAT a gentler mode than is generally pursued of taming, or as it is termed, of breaking animals, for the use of man, might be equally advantageous is usually allowed, but seldom practised. We are satisfied with acquiring their services, without much regarding the means by which they are procured, and are unwilling to submit to the tedious course of milder perseverance, while we have in our power the speedier one of severe discipline, not reflecting how frequently, when the lash is witheld, the violence of their nature will break out, even on their immediate masters. I acknowledge that the conduct of a brute is the result of habit however impressed, but it is still a question, and will probably ever remain so, whether habits of patient submission, and endurance of abuse, could not as well be obtained, especially among the nobler species of creatures, whose spirited exertion adds so much to their value, by mild and gentle treatment, as by the harsher methods generally pursued. I am inclined to think that brutes as well as men, have feelings that may be wrought upon, and affections that may be turned to our advantage, if treated with indulgence; and this I shall attempt to establish in a popular manner. I will relate a story which happened almost entirely within my own knowledge, of a dog whose ferocious habits were totally removed, by familiarizing him with the very object on which his fierceness had been accustomed to display itself.

Joe, the subject of my story, was of a mixed breed between a Newfoundland-dog and a mastiff, and first saw light on board an American trader, where he also spent the first six or seven months of his life. About this age, he was given to a gentleman near Londonderry, and when leading on shore, for the first time in his life, either from his ignorance of creatures that he had never met with before, or prompted by his natural ferocity, he darted from the hand that was leading him, and fastened upon the neck of a horse that was passing by, from which he was with great difficulty disengaged by his master, whose exertions, no doubt, were much strengthened by the dread of having to pay for the horse.

In the possession of his new master he watched the house, yards, and offices, kept intruders at a distance, and was considered by the maurauders round this gentleman's seat, as a most vigilant guard, and most terrible enemy to their pilfering. But surely if perfection is not the lot of man, we can hardly expect it in a brute. Joe's good qualities were sullied, and his vigilance and fidelity rendered almost useless to his master, by his fierceness. For though he lived in luxury, and meals were provided purposely for him, he could not repress his fondness for fresh mutton. The gentleman's sheep were found killed at night, and the delinquency was traced to Joe; he, like rational creatures might plead the force of a natural passion, but it would not be allowed him, and death or banishment must be the consequence of a repetition of his crime. Various plans were pursued to break him of this habit, and among others the following; he was muzzled, his limbs tied up, and in this condition laid across the door of an out-house, into which the sheep had been previously driven; they were then forced out; most of them sprung over him, dreading him even when fallen; but the ram could not pass this opportunity of revenging his slaughtered companions, and his own terrors, and stepping back, butted at him with all his might. This he was suffered to repeat as long as it was thought the dog could endure it. Joe was at length delivered from him, and untied; such was the severity of the discipline he underwent, that he was hardly able to limp to the kitchen fire; the rustics rejoicing in his downfall, and prophesying that he would never again meddle with the sheep.

In this hope, Joe was again permitted to go his rounds. He still exerted his useful qualities in his master's service; he continued watchful and faithful, but he could not

command his passions. How long he looked over the wall of the sheep fold before he leaped it, whether he listened with one paw on the top-stone, for the shouts of the servants exulting in his fallen state at the stable door, or whether he felt any compunction from the bruises he received there, or when he did make the spring, whether he avoided the ram that took such an ungenerous advantage of him, I do not know, but this I know, that sheep were killed, and the deaths again traced to Joe.

Here severity bordering upon cruelty had an opportunity of fully displaying its power, here the effect of violence upon natural habits might clearly be traced. The experiment was tried and it failed. It remains for me to tell how the feelings of this creature were so wrought upon by gentleness, that his nature was totally changed. I acknowledge the change arose from accidental circumstances, but the greatest discoveries can boast no nobler birth, and if any one wish to try a new mode of treatment to brutes, this accident may serve as a model.

A lamb that was deserted by its dam, was brought into the house and put under the care of a woman servant; it was kept in the upper part of a hen-coop, to secure it from the dog, who was observed to look at it very wistfully; and its safety was imputed to its being out of his reach. When the woman fed the lamb, she at first inadvertently gave what remained of its milk to the dog, and Joe began to attend the lamb's meals regularly, for the sake of what he left, and at length became so well reconciled to him, that he used to lick the milk that spilled about the lamb's chops. The woman observing this, improved upon the hint, and now purposely dropped milk upon the lamb which the dog as regularly licked off his woolly coat, without attempting to offer it the least violence. It now became unnecessary to put the lamb out of Joe's reach, and before the spring was far advanced, the two slept together before the fire, the lamb frequently lying between the paws of the greatest enemy to his race. By the time summer had set in, the lamb, by having been a great pet with the younger part of the family, became very troublesome in the house, and was sent along with others, to a sheep-walk about a mile distant. No sooner had it departed than Joe was missed, and no account was got of him for a day or two, when the family learned from the herd, that he had followed his favourite, and he and the lamb were found lying together, in the midst of the sheep. From that time his entire disposition seemed to have undergone a change: he is less apt to be sullen or sulky towards the domestics, and the youngest child plays with him, without exciting any apprehension for his safety. He now protects the sheep, that he used to worry, and attacks those strange dogs that venture in among the flock; and it may not be undeserving of being mentioned, that in one of these encounters, the lamb, now well grown, came to his assistance, and butted at the stranger, until he was forced to fly.

This I acknowledge may be considered as a solitary instance, on which a change of conduct ought not to be founded; and the objection will be allowed its full force by me with respect to rational creatures, on whom the power of habit exerts itself differently, in different persons, according to their various capacities of reason or fancy; on some it acts with vigour, while others seem totally to reject its influence. But in regard to brutes, their instructive faculties seem nearly on a level, and of course an alteration in the habits of one, will be effected by the same means, that produced a change in those of another. It is well known that the harsh methods generally in use, will produce the same effects in one as another, and why may not a contrary mode of treatment be equally effectual in each? S. Y. N.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

ON perusing a volume of the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, I met the following curious description of some ancient trumpets, which had been dug out of a bog, in the neighbourhood of Armagh, not many years ago.